

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, 6, 10 and 11 have been cancelled. Claims 3, 5, 7, 12, 15 and 16 have been rewritten in independent form but have not otherwise been amended. Claims 3-5, 7-9 and 12-20 remain in the application -- 7 independent claims and a total of 15 claims. Please charge \$336.00 to Deposit Account 04-1073 for the additional independent claims. In addition, please charge any deficiencies in the fees and credit any overpayments associated with this paper to Deposit Account 04-1073. Applicants reserve the right to pursue the original claims and other claims in this application and in other applications. A Petition for a three-month extension of time is being filed concurrently herewith.

Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by Ishida. Reconsideration is respectfully requested. Claim 4 depends from claim 3 (discussed below). Claim 4 should be allowable along with claim 3 and for other reasons.

Claims 5, 7, 15 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Ishida. Reconsideration is respectfully requested. The Office Action concedes that the claimed invention is distinguishable over Ishida, but asserts that the differences are "conventional" and "would have been an obvious feature" in Ishida "for increased flexibility in the molding process." All of these assertions are respectfully traversed. Among other things, it appears unlikely that the Ishida apparatus would be used to produce concave lenses of different sizes and shapes. The Ishida apparatus is said to accommodate problems associated with filling the illustrated concave mold cavity, which has a thin intermediate part. In any event, in the absence of any secondary prior art references, the rejection of claims 5, 7, 15 and 16 should be withdrawn. See M.P.E.P. § 2144.03.

Dependent claims 8 and 9 should be allowable along with claim 7 and for other reasons.

Claims 3, 12-14 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Ishida in view of Pinsonneault. Reconsideration is respectfully requested. Ishida discloses an apparatus for forming a concave lens. The cross-sectional shape of the mold cavity is shown in Figs. 2 and 5. Pinsonneault discloses mold pins 44 (Fig. 5) associated with movable parts 46, 52, 54 (Fig. 6). A portion of a molded part 48 is formed in the space defined between the pins 44. Applicants do not understand how or why the teachings of the Pinsonneault mold pins 44 would have been applicable to the Ishida apparatus. The contention that the Pinsonneault mold pins 44 are "similar" is also not understood. "Similar" to what? Applicants do not understand why the Office Action contends that that the Pinsonneault mold pins 44 would "facilitate the formation of the mold cavities." Which mold cavities? Applicants respectfully submit that there is nothing in the prior art references to suggest that the Pinsonneault mold pins 44, which have movable parts to enclose and release a portion of the molded work, would have been of any help in forming the mold cavities of the Ishida apparatus.

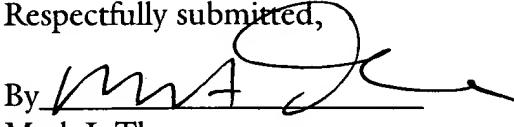
Claims 18-20 should be allowable along with claim 17 and for other reasons.

Please note that the canceled and/or amended claims have been canceled and/or amended in this case solely for the purpose of furthering the prosecution of the present application. Applicants reserve the right to claim the subject matter of the canceled claims, the claims pending prior to this Amendment, and/or the subject matter of other claims embodied in this application, or any continuation, division, CPA, reissue, reexamination or other application. Any amendments made to the application are not made for the purpose of distinguishing the claims over prior art, except as specifically discussed in the Remarks section of this paper.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the outstanding rejection of the claims and to pass this application to issue.

Dated: March 11, 2002

Respectfully submitted,

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Version With Markings to Show Changes Made

3. (Amended) A mold apparatus for producing molded optical elements, said apparatus comprising:

a first mold unit for defining mold cavities and flow passageways;

a second mold unit having an integrated mold surface for sealing against said first unit, said integrated mold surface containing a plurality of patterns for molding optical patterns in the optical elements;

a mechanism for moving said first unit toward said second unit to form said flow passageways; and

[The mold apparatus of claim 2, further comprising] mold pins for defining said mold cavities, said mold pins being located in said first mold unit.

5. (Amended) A mold apparatus for producing molded optical elements, said apparatus comprising:

a first mold unit for defining mold cavities and flow passageways; and

a second mold unit having an integrated mold surface for sealing against said first unit, said integrated mold surface containing a plurality of patterns for molding optical patterns in the optical elements; and

[The mold apparatus of claim 1,] wherein said first mold unit is removable, and wherein said apparatus is arranged to receive other first mold units to produce products of different sizes and shapes.

7. (Amended) A mold apparatus for producing molded optical elements, said apparatus comprising:

a first mold unit for defining a plurality of mold cavities and flow passageways;

a second mold unit having a mold surface for sealing against said first unit, said mold surface containing a corresponding plurality of patterns for molding optical patterns in the optical elements, said optical patterns being located on a single flat metal puck covering the plurality of mold cavities and said flow passageways; and

[The mold apparatus of claim 6, further comprising] means for removing said metal puck, such that other pucks may be installed in said apparatus to produce products having different optical characteristics.

12. (Amended) A method for making molded optical elements, said method comprising the steps of:

providing a single metal puck with a plurality of optical patterns;
locating said single metal puck against a mold surface to seal a plurality of mold cavities and flow passageways formed upon said mold surface; and
subsequently, molding optical elements within said mold cavities such that said optical patterns of said single metal puck are formed in said optical elements; and
moving said mold surface toward said metal puck to form said flow passageways;
and

[The method of claim 11, further comprising the step of] using mold pins to define the thicknesses of said mold cavities.

15. (Amended) A method for making molded optical elements, said method comprising the steps of:

providing a single metal puck with a plurality of optical patterns;
locating said single metal puck against a mold surface to seal a plurality of mold cavities and flow passageways formed upon said mold surface; and
subsequently, molding optical elements within said mold cavities such that said optical patterns of said single metal puck are formed in said optical elements; and

[The method of claim 10, further comprising the steps of] separating said mold surface from said metal puck, and locating another mold surface against said metal puck to form different size mold cavities.

16. (Amended) A method for making molded optical elements, said method comprising the steps of:

providing a single metal puck with a plurality of optical patterns;

locating said single metal puck against a mold surface to seal a plurality of mold cavities and flow passageways formed upon said mold surface; and

subsequently, molding optical elements within said mold cavities such that said optical patterns of said single metal puck are formed in said optical elements; and

[The method of claim 10, further comprising the steps of] separating said puck from said mold surface, and providing another metal puck having patterns formed therein to form optical elements having different optical characteristics.